



# Columbia spotted frog Great Basin population *Rana luteiventris*

## STATUS

Candidate (57 FR 59257, December 14, 1992)

## DESCRIPTION

The spotted frog is green to brown in color, with irregular black spots that are sometimes raised. They may also have a salmon or yellow coloration on the underside of the belly and legs. Tadpoles are light to dark brown. Most spotted frogs are about one to four inches long. Adult frogs have a lifespan of four to eight years, and they begin reproducing as early as in their second year. Spotted frogs may not reproduce every year, especially in cooler climates. Females lay large egg masses (softball-sized) in late May, depending on weather and climate. Tadpoles hatch one to two weeks later, eventually moving from breeding ponds to feeding sites in late August.

Spotted frogs live in marshes, permanent ponds, lake edges and slow streams, usually where there is abundant vegetation. The frog's life cycle begins with spring breeding in shallow waters. By summer, stream banks, lakes and pond shores provide good foraging areas for the frogs. Adults then move into hibernation in the late fall and winter into spring reaches, permanent pond sites or vegetated undercuts along streams.

## HISTORY

Prior to 1997, the Columbia spotted frog and the Oregon spotted frog (*Rana pretiosa*) were lumped into one species, *Rana pretiosa*. Additional genetic information indicated that they are two separate species. Columbia spotted frogs have been further divided into four populations, including the Great Basin population.

## DISTRIBUTION

The Great Basin population is found south and west of the Snake River in eastern Oregon, southwestern Idaho and northern Nevada. In Idaho, it occurs mostly at higher elevations in the Owyhee mountains.

## WHAT HAS THREATENED THIS SPECIES?

Population status and types or degrees of threat to the spotted frog are not conclusive, but it is known that threats to the Great Basin population include habitat loss due to poorly managed livestock grazing, loss of riparian habitat from human activities, and diversions of water from springs and streams.

## WHAT IS BEING DONE TO HELP RECOVER THIS SPECIES?

Efforts are underway to survey areas with potential frog habitat to better identify species status and threats. Numerous new sites have been located due to these efforts. Additional studies will refine our understanding of threats and help identify potential conservation efforts.

## REFERENCES

Idaho Department of Fish & Game, Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation, Bureau of Land Management, US Forest Service (Regions 1 and 4), and US Fish & Wildlife Service. 1995 (draft). Spotted Frog Conservation Assessment and Conservation Strategy. 33 pgs.

